

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 130604

EXDIS

FOR SONNENFELDT ONLY

FOL REPEAT OF GENEVA 4167 TO SECSTATE INFO HELSINKI MOSCOW

NATO JUNE 4

QTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 4167

EXDIS

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: CSCE, PFOR XG

SUBJ: CSCE: TIMING AND LEVEL OF STAGE III

REF: GENEVA 3631

1. FINNISH DELEGATION HEAD (ILONIEMI) TOLD US PRIVATELY JUNE 3 THAT FINNISH GOVERNMENT NOW FELS OBLIGED TO RELINQUISH OPTION IT HAS ON HOTEL SPACE AND SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF FOR CSCE STAGE III DURING FIRST HALF OF JULY. ILONIEMI NOTED THAT FINNS HAD ALWAYS TAKEN POSITION THAT FOUR WEEKS WOULD BE REQUIRED BETWEEN DECISION ON TIMING OF STAGE III AND ACTUAL CONVENING OF STAGE III GATHERING. SINCE NO SUCH DECISION HAS YET BEEN TAKEN, FINNS HAVE CONCLUDED
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THAT STAGE III IN EARLY JULY IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE. ILONIEMI

SAID HE WOULD ANNOUNCE THIS DECISION TO COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON JUNE 5, AND WOULD THEN TRY TO FOCUS CONFERENCE THINKING ON POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING STAGE III IN SECOND HALF OF JULY. FINNISH ANNOUNCEMENT, COUPLED WITH RECENT CONFERENCE PROGRESS, WILL STIMULATE DISCUSSION HERE OF STAGE III DATES.

2. FINNISH REQUIREMENT OF FOUR-WEEK INTERVAL BETWEEN DECISION ON DATE AND ACTUAL CONVENING OF STAGE III IMPOSES AN APPROXIMATE DEADLINE FOR DECISION ON DATE IF STAGE III IS TO BE CONVENED BEFORE END OF JULY. MOST DELEGATIONS HERE CONSIDER LAST WEEK IN JULY (WEEK BEGINNING JULY 28), AS EXCLUDED FOR STAGE III, SINCE IT IS TOO CLOSE TO AUGUST VACATION PERIOD TO HAVE IMPACT ON WESTERN EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION. IN ORDER TO CONVENE STAGE III DURING WEEK BEGINNING JULY 21, DECISION ON DATE WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN BY FRIDAY, JUNE 20.

3. WESTERN DELEGATIONS CONTINUE TO BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT NO FIRM COMMITMENT ON LEVEL OR TIMING OF STAGE III SHOULD BE GIVEN UNTIL KEY SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES (E.G. CBMS, HUMAN CONTACTS AND INFORMATION) OF INTEREST TO THE WEST ARE RESOLVED. HOWEVER, CURRENT SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND THEIR EVIDENT HASTE TO COMPLETE STAGE II, POSES THE POSSIBILITY THAT THEY MAY MAKE ENOUGH CONCESSIONS DURING THIS WEEK AND NEXT WEEK TO SUBSTANTIALLY FILL THIS CONDITION AND MAKE IT NECESSARY FOR WESTERN DELEGATIONS TO TAKE DECISION ON TIMING AND LEVEL DURING WEEK OF JUNE 16-20.

4. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT STAGE II NEGOTIATIONS NEED NOT BE FULLY COMPLETED AT TIME OF DECISION ON STAGE III TIMING. FINNS AND SWISS (WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PRINTING FINAL DOCUMENTS) SAY TEN-DAY INTERVAL BETWEEN TWO STAGES WILL SUFFICE FOR PRINTING AND PREPARATION OF DOCUMENTS FOR SIGNING. THUS ABOUT THREE WEEKS WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR CLEAN-UP AND RESOLUTION OF SECONDARY ISSUES EVEN AFTER DECISION IS TAKEN ON DATE OF STAGE III. THIS WOULD OF COURSE LEAVE VERY LITTLE TIME TO DEAL WITH A LARGE VOLUME OF LEFTOVER WORK, BUT PRESSURES CREATED BY AGREED TIMEFRAME WOULD SQUEEZE OUT MANY MINOR PROBLEMS.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD NOW BE GIVEN IN WASHINGTON TO QUESTION OF FINAL DECISION ON TIMING, IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO JOIN IN A DECISION ON TIMING AND LEVEL IF CONFIDENTIAL

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SOVIET CONCESSIONS DURING THE NEXT TEN DAYS MAKE THIS ADVISABLE. WE WILL SEEK SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS ON THESE TWO POINTS WHEN THE SITUATION CALLS FOR THEM, BUT DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE AWARE THAT WE MAY THEN NEED THEM ON SHORT NOTICE.
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